

El Presente

Journal for Sephardic Studies
Jurnal de estudios sefaradis

Editors:

Eliezer Papo • Tamar Alexander

El Presente, Vol. 11

December 2017



Ben-Gurion University
of the Negev



Moshe David Gaon Center
for Ladino Culture

Editorial Council: **David M. Bunis**, Hebrew Language Department, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; **Paloma Díaz-Mas**, CSIC, Madrid; **Jelena Erdeljan**, Center for the Study of Jewish Art and Culture, University of Belgrade; **Mladenka Ivanković**, Institute for Contemporary History of Serbia, Belgrade; **Nenad Makuljević**, Center for Visual Culture of the Balkans, University of Belgrade; **Alisa Meyuhav Ginio**, Department of History, Tel Aviv University; **Devin Naar**, Stroum Center for Jewish Studies, University of Washington, Seattle; **Aldina Quintana Rodriguez**, Iberian and Latin-American Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; **Shmuel Rafael**, Department for Literature of the Jewish People, Bar-Ilan University; **Aron Rodrigue**, Department of History, Stanford University; **Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald**, Department of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, Bar-Ilan University; **Edwin Seroussi**, Musicology Department, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; **Cengiz Sisman**, Department of History, University of Houston - Clear Lake; **Katja Šmid**, CSIC, Madrid; **Michael Studemund-Halévy**, Institute for the History of the German Jews, University of Hamburg; **Jagoda Večerina-Tomaić**, Department of Judaic Studies, University of Zagreb.

Editorial Coordinators: **Maayan Mangoni**, **Avishag Ben Shalom**

Language Editors:

Dina Hurvitz (Hebrew), **Fern Seckbach** (English), **Orna Stoliar** (Spanish)

Graphic Design: **ER Design Team Ltd.**

Print: **BGU Print Unit**

Cover Photos:

Hebrew side: Kal Grande, The Great (Sephardic) Synagogue in Sarajevo, from Eliezer Papo's private archive.

Ladino/English side: Isak Demajo, a Sephardic soldier in the Serbian Army, courtesy of the Jewish Historical Museum, Belgrade (Inv. Numb. K.4-1-6; 5831).

Published with the support of our friend

Jim Blum

Baltimore

USA

ISSN 2518-9883

© All rights reserved

Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Culture
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva
Israel 2017

English / (Judeo)Spanish Section Table of Contents

Preface	5
Stevan Milovanović Las yervas i otras drogas de los teferikos i las listas de las butikas atares de los Sefaradim de Saray; los espesies de las drogas i la posibilidad de sus uzansiya oy diya	11
Doğa Filiz Subaşı • María-José Cano Bosnia y Herzegovina en el libro de Izak Gabay <i>Yildiz i sus sekretos: el reyno de Abdul Hamid</i>	37
Jagoda Večerina-Tomaić Bohoreta, Torn between Zionism and local patriotism	51
Miloš M. Damjanović Jewish Students of the State Women's Grammar School in Sarajevo during the School Year 1934/35	67
Žarko Primorac Emerik Blum – a Man Ahead of His Time	93
Radmila Šutalo The Tolentino Family, One of the Oldest Sephardic Families from Dubrovnik	103
Paloma Díaz-Mas Sephardim in the Spanish Newspapers during World War I	117

Alisa Meyuhas Ginio

Ego-Documents: Two Jerusalemite Sephardim recalling the Great War 133

Gila Hadar

The Salonika Campaign: Memoirs and Literature 141

Pilar Romeu

Personal Narratives from the Great War: A Look into Contemporary
Sephardic Memoirs, (Auto)Biographies and Autobiographical Novels 163

List of Participants

191

BIBLIOTECA DIGITAL DEL CIDICSEF

Sephardim in the Spanish Newspapers during World War I

Paloma Díaz-Mas

CSIC (Madrid) / Universidad del País Vasco (Vitoria)

The aim of this paper is to show how the image of Sephardic Jews is treated in the Spanish press during World War I.

Of course, Spanish newspapers published many pieces of news and articles about the belligerents' countries. In most of these countries there was a Jewish population, and in Turkey and the Balkans, most of the Jews were Sephardim. So, the information about the war contributed to the increased presence of information about Sephardim in the Spanish press.¹

1. Political, social and cultural context

First, let us briefly recall the political, social, and cultural situation in Spain between July 1914 and November 1918.

On the political side, Spain claimed to be a neutral country and did not participate in World War I; nevertheless, the war had economic, social, and political consequences in Spain. It should also be noted that in 1912 a Spanish-French protectorate, which lasted until 1956, was established in Morocco.

As for the social aspect, in 1915-1918 Spanish society was remarkably uniform from the religious and ethnic point of view; however, the colonial expansion of Spain in Morocco during the protectorate put some Spaniards in touch with Arabs and Berbers as well as with the Jewish minority of Morocco, largely of Sephardic origin.

Since their Expulsion in 1492, officially there were no Jews in Spain, and of course there were no Jewish communities. During the nineteenth century, the Jewish question had been discussed in Parliament and in the press, in relation to the debate on religious freedom before the proclamation of the constitution of 1876 or in connection with

¹ This paper is a product of the research project FFI2012-31625 *Los sefardíes ante sí mismos y sus relaciones con España III: hacia la recuperación de un patrimonio cultural en peligro*, financed by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of Spain.

proposals to render assistance to Russian Jews persecuted after the pogroms of 1881. Yet, in fact, the debate was merely theoretical, a discussion about Jews in a country with almost no Jews.

Also, some information about the Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire reached Spain through several Spanish diplomats in Istanbul who, from the 1870s to WWI, promoted Spanish consular protection of the Ottoman Sephardim. A number of these diplomats published articles about the Sephardic Jews in the Spanish press.²

WWI coincided with the period of the founding of the first Jewish communities in Spain since the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. In 1913, a small Jewish community was founded in Seville; in 1916, religious worship started at the synagogue in Madrid (officially opened in February 1917), although the community was not officially established until 1920; on December 31st, 1918 (when the war was over), a Jewish community was established in Barcelona.³

With respect to culture and mentalities, when WWI began it was still not very long after the political and opinion campaign for the promotion of relations between Spain and the Sephardim urged by Senator Pulido in 1904-1905. This campaign did not attain many practical results but did influence Spanish public opinion, especially among intellectuals and the media. In this context, note should be taken of the positive attitude toward the Jews by the intellectuals of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza [Free Institution for Teaching], the most progressive educational organization in Spain, founded in 1876 and active until 1936.

At the same time, interest in Sephardic culture emerged in Spanish intellectual and academic circles. As early as 1900, Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo included a section devoted to Sephardic ballads in his anthology of Castilian lyric poets (*Antología de*

2 Pablo Martín Asuero, *El Consulado de España en Estambul y la protección de sefardíes entre 1804 y 1930*, Isis, Istanbul 2011; idem, "El consulado de España en Estambul y la protección de sefardíes (1804-1913)", *Quaderns de la Mediterràni* 8 (2007), pp. 169-178.

3 See Haim Avni, *España, Franco y los judíos*, Madrid, Altalena 1982, pp. 5-31; José Antonio Lisbona, *Retorno a Sefarad: La política de España hacia sus judíos en el siglo XX*, Riopiedras-Quinto Centenario-Comisión Nacional Judía Sefarad 92, Barcelona 1993, pp. 19-44; Jacobo Israel Garzón, Alejandro Baer, Alberto Benasuly, and Uriel Macías, *Los judíos en la España contemporánea: Apuntes históricos y jurídicos*, Federación de Comunidades Judías de España-Hebraica Ediciones, Madrid 2008, pp. 16-22; Danielle Rozenberg, *La España contemporánea y la cuestión judía*, Marcial Pons, Madrid 2010, pp. 71-135; and Isidro González, *Los judíos y España después de la expulsión: Desde 1492 hasta nuestros días*, Almuzara, Córdoba 2014, pp. 71-206.

poetas líricos castellanos, which aspired to establish a canon of Spanish poetry).⁴ Later, following the ideological trend of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios [Board for Advanced Studies, JAE] and the Centro de Estudios Históricos [Center for Historical Studies, CEH] promoted field surveys to collect traditional Sephardic ballads and songs in Turkey, the Balkans, and Morocco (conducted by Manuel Manrique de Lara in 1911, 1915, and 1916).⁵ In addition, in 1915 a “Chair of Language and Rabbinic Literature” was established at the Central University of Madrid, which was occupied by Professor Abraham Yahuda (Jerusalem 1877-New Haven, Connecticut 1951).⁶

2. Types of information about Jews in Spanish newspapers

In this situation, what kind of information about the Sephardim appeared in the Spanish press, and in which contexts?

- 4 See Paloma Díaz-Mas, “Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, editor de romances sefardíes”, *Abenámar: Cuadernos de la Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal. Revista de romancero y filología* 1 (2016), pp. 129-152. The texts of the ballads were sent to Menéndez Pelayo in 1885 by the writer Carlos Coello y Pacheco, nephew of Diego Coello de Portugal y Quesada, ambassador of Spain in Istanbul between 1884 and 1886, and renowned defender of the Sephardic Jews; about Coello y Quesada, see Pablo Martín Asuero, *Diego de Coello y Quesada y la cuestión de Oriente (1882-1897): artículos sobre Turquía, Egipto, Sudán, Rumanía, Serbia, Bulgaria, Grecia y los patriarcas orientales*, Istanbul, Isis, 2003.
- 5 A fundamental study on the JAE is the book by A. Jiménez Landi, *La Institución Libre de Enseñanza y su ambiente*, Taurus, Madrid 1973, 3 volumes, (reedition Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, 1996, 4 volumes); on the history and work of JAE and CEH, see José Manuel Sánchez Ron (ed.), *La Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas 80 años después: Simposio internacional, 15-17 de diciembre de 1987*, CSIC, Madrid 1988; and Miguel Ángel Puig-Samper Mulero (ed.), *Tiempo de investigación. JAE-CSIC, cien años de ciencia en España*, CSIC, Madrid 2007. Especially on the work of Menéndez Pidal and the CEH with respect to Sephardic culture, Paloma Díaz-Mas, “Ramón Menéndez Pidal y la cultura sefardí”, Nicolás Asensio Jiménez and Sara Sánchez Bellido (eds.), *Lengua y cultura sefardí: Estudios en memoria de Samuel G. Armistead*, Fundación Areces-Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Madrid 2015, pp. 179-210; and Paloma Díaz-Mas, “The Hispanic Legacy and Sephardic Culture: Sephardim and Hispanists in the First Half of the 20th Century”, Mahir Saul and José Ignacio Hualde (eds.), *Sepharad as Imagined Community. Language, History and Religion from the Early Modern Period to the 21st Century*, Peter Lang, New York 2017, pp. 231-254.
- 6 Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida, *El Antisemitismo en España: La imagen del judío (1812-2002)*, Marcial Pons, Madrid 2002, p. 265; and especially Santiago García-Jalón de la Loma, *Don Abraham Yahuda y la Universidad Central de Madrid (1915-1923)*, Universidad Pontificia, Salamanca 2006.

To find out, I searched through ten Spanish newspapers and magazines, published in Madrid, belonging to different ideological trends, including important daily newspapers, general information magazines, cultural magazines, and pictorials. The newspapers examined were *El Globo* (a moderate republican daily published from 1875 to 1932), *El Imparcial* (independent newspaper, 1867-1927), *El Liberal* (moderate republican, 1879-1939), *El País* (official voice of the Progressive Republican party, 1887-1921), *La Correspondencia de España* (independent, 1859-1925), *La Lectura* (progressive cultural magazine related to the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, 1901-1920), *Música* (specializing in information about musical events), *Nuestro tiempo* (conservative magazine, 1901-1926), *Por Esos Mundos* (weekly of general information, 1900-1926), and *Renovación Española* (pro-German and anti-war magazine, January-November 1918).⁷

There is not much information about Jews in the aforementioned sources; in some publications, I did not find any information on the subject. But the corpus does allow us to establish a typology of different types of information that Spanish newspapers published on this topic, as follows:

1. Pieces of news about the Jews of Morocco (not related to war information).
2. Reports on cultural and academic activities held in Spain, regarding Jewish culture.
3. Information about Jews (in general) in news items about the war.
4. News on the war that reported about Sephardic Jews.
5. The presence of Sephardim in Spain, due to events of the war.

Unrelated to information on the war, pieces of news about the Jews of Morocco were frequently published. Newspapers always use the word “Hebrew” (not “Jew”) for referring to the Moroccan Jews (largely Sephardim), in most cases to mention their participation in public and social events next to “Spaniards” and “Moors”.

Information on cultural and academic activities held in Spain, regarding Jewish culture, also appears in newspapers.

For example, several articles mention the foundation at the Universidad de Madrid of a chair of Rabbinical Studies or publish reviews of lectures given by Professor Yahuda.⁸

⁷ The newspapers can be consulted in open access in the Digital Library of the National Library of Spain <http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/HemerotecaDigital/> (accessed at April 30th, 2017).

⁸ For example, *El Liberal* (December 24th, 1915), p. 1c-d; *La Correspondencia de España* (April 1st, 1914), 7b; *La Lectura* 201 (September 1917), p. 431.

Moreover, in 1917 the magazine *Música* published a long biographical sketch of the musician Manuel Manrique de Lara and Berry, which mentioned that after having been commissioned by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Manrique collected thousands of “Spanish ballads” and their music from among Sephardic Jews of the Eastern Mediterranean:

Tampoco puede dejarse pasar sin alabanza la colección de romances castellanos que recogió en Oriente durante el viaje que hizo allá, pensionado por la Junta para ampliación de estudios en el extranjero. *Folk-lorista* apasionado [...] ha recogido un número considerable de poesías narrativas y épicas destinadas al romancero tradicional, en colaboración con Menéndez Pidal, que será un verdadero tesoro. Además de los romances recogidos en España, solamente entre los judíos de Oriente y en Marruecos (en tres viajes salpicados de episodios novelescos, exponiendo su salud entre el cólera y otras epidemias, como la peste bubónica), ha recogido cien mil versos y muy cerca de mil melodías, colección folk-lórica de extraordinario interés. En los Balkanes, Sarajevo, Belgrado, Sofía, Adrinópolis, Constantinopla, Salónica, Smirna, la isla de Rhodas, Beyruth, Damasco, todo el Egipto, Palestina y Grecia, ha recogido “sesenta mil versos” de romance. Por las melodías coleccionadas se ve que los judíos de origen español cantan como aún se canta en muchos pueblos de España.

[Nor can we pass without praise the collection of Castilian romances that he collected in the Orient during the trip financed by the Junta para Ampliación de Estudios he made there. As passionate Folklorist ..., he has collected a considerable number of narrative and epic poems for the compilation of traditional balladry, in collaboration with Menéndez Pidal, that will be a true treasure. In addition to the ballads collected in Spain, among the Jews of the Eastern Mediterranean and Morocco alone (in three journeys dotted with novelistic adventures, exposing their health to cholera and other epidemics, such as the bubonic plague), he collected a 1,000 verses and very close to a thousand melodies, an extraordinarily interesting folkloric collection. In the Balkans, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Sofia, Edirne, Constantinople, Salonika, Smirna, Rhodes, Beirut, Damascus, Egypt, Palestine and Greece, he collected ‘60,000 verses’ of ballads. The melodies he collected show that the Jews of Spanish origin sing as it is still sung in many towns of Spain].⁹

9 *Música*, I 14 (July 15th, 1917)

3. Information about the War and the Jews

Now let us consider how the Jews appear in the information about the war.

In several contributions, the participation of Jews in contending armies is highlighted. For example, the participation of Jews as soldiers and officers in the German army is reported in items published by *El imparcial* in 1914 and 1915:

Según datos muy interesantes que publica *The Times*, la guerra actual ha producido modificaciones muy profundas en el carácter alemán. El Ejército germánico ha cesado de ser el dominio exclusivo de los “junkers” y de la vieja aristocracia; actualmente se halla abierto hasta a los mismos judíos, promovidos en gran número al rango de oficiales. [...] El Ejército alemán no es ya un Ejército de casta: es un Ejército nacional como el francés, y será prudente contar con este cambio.

[According to very interesting information published by *The Times*, the current war has produced very profound changes in the German character. The Germanic Army has ceased to be the exclusive domain of the *junkers* and the old aristocracy. At the moment, it is open even to the Jews, promoted in large number to the rank of officers. [...] The German Army is no longer a caste army: it is a national army like the French one, and it will be prudent to take this change into account].¹⁰

Newspapers also report on the appeal of the Socialist League of American Jews for Jews to enlist as volunteers to fight against Germany (*La Correspondencia de España*, March 7, 1918, p. 1c); as well as on a banquet hosted in New York for volunteers of the Jewish battalion that would fight in Palestine:

Nueva York, 29. El Club de Artistas Judíos ha dado un banquete a los 500 miembros de la Legión Judía que van a prestar servicios en Palestina, la víspera de su partida para aquel país, donde se unirán a los 2000 miembros que tiene allí la Legión. Entre los comensales estuvieron Nathan Straus y el comandante C. Brooman White, de la Misión de reclutamiento inglesa. White dijo: “El batallón judío lo está haciendo muy bien. Fue organizado con el propósito de dar a los judíos la oportunidad de luchar por la conservación de Palestina. Es la primera vez en la Historia que bajo leyes inglesas puede un contingente de soldados escoger su esfera de lucha. Es un gran privilegio, y bajo él, los judíos hoy pasean por las calles de Nueva York la bandera de Sión, por cuya protección lucharán en Palestina”.

10 *El Imparcial* (May 25th, 1915), p. 2d.

[The Jewish Artists Club gave a banquet for the 500 members of the Jewish Legion who will serve in Palestine, on the eve of their departure for that country, where they will join the 2000 members of the Legion. Among the guests were Nathan Straus and Commander C. Brooman White of the English Recruitment Mission. White said: 'The Jewish battalion is doing very well. It was organized for the purpose of giving the Jews the opportunity to fight for the preservation of Palestine, and it is the first time in history that under English law a contingent of soldiers may choose its sphere of struggle. It is a great privilege, and under it, Jews today walk the streets of New York [with] the flag of Zion, for whose defense they will fight in Palestine].¹¹

Both *El Liberal* and *El País* published a short piece of news, entitled "Los hebreos fomentan la marina griega" [The Jews encourage Greek navy], highlighting that

El gran rabino de Salónica, en nombre de los hebreos de dicha población, la mayor parte de los cuales son de origen español, ha ofrecido al gobierno griego abrir una suscripción para contribuir al aumento de la Marina de Grecia, produciendo este ofrecimiento gran entusiasmo en el país helénico.

[The Chief Rabbi of Salonika, on behalf of the Hebrews of this population, most of whom are of Spanish origin, has offered the Greek government to open a subscription to contribute to increase the Greek navy. This offering produced great enthusiasm in the Hellenic country].¹²

Conversely, Jews were also identified as non-mobilized population, as in an item published by *La Correspondencia de España* in 1915 that stated that in Bucharest all males between ages 17 and 50 years have been mobilized, so only "los inútiles, algunos judíos y un pequeño número de funcionarios que se consagran al espionaje" [disabled, some Jews and a small number of officials who devote themselves to espionage] remain in the city".¹³

11 *La Correspondencia de España* (May 31st, 1918), p. 1d.

12 *El liberal* (January 4th, 1915), p. 2b. The same news appears in *El País* (January 4th, 1915), p. 2d.

13 *La Correspondencia de España* (November 7th, 1915), p. 1e.

Interestingly, I did not find in the newspapers any mention of the mobilization of the Jews for the Turkish army.

4. Information about Sephardim

However, news referring specifically to the Sephardim is quite scarce. Often newspapers published informative sections with geographic and demographic data on countries and cities involved in the war. And sometimes, while speaking about the population of those places, they expressly stated that a part of the population is Sephardic, and some additional information about the Sephardim is offered.

That happened even before the outbreak of the war, when the Balkans were considered a “hot zone” from the information point of view. Thus, on July 10th, 1914, *El País* (p. 3) published an inset with five photographs of views of Sarajevo, including one of “Un cementerio español en Sarajevo (de los judíos españoles)” [A Spanish cemetery in Sarajevo (of Spanish Jews)].

In 1915, under the section “La guerra continental y marítima” [The continental and maritime war], *El Liberal* included an article entitled “Salónica” that offers some geographic and demographic information about the city, and among other observations, states that

La población israelita descende de los judíos expulsados de España, que han conservado la lengua española, aunque salpicada de frase y giros turcos, griegos y eslavos. Este idioma lo escriben los judíos en caracteres hebraicos. Los judíos de Salónica no son solamente comerciantes y banqueros, sino que también ejercen diversos oficios manuales y algunos son marinos y pescadores.

[The Israelite population is descended from Jews expelled from Spain, who have preserved the Spanish language, although peppered with Turkish, Greek and Slav phrases and twists. This language is written by the Jews in Hebrew characters. The Jews of Salonika are not only merchants and bankers, but there are also craftsmen, sailors, and fishermen].¹⁴

The same month the war broke out, the journal *Nuestro Tiempo* published an article extracted from the French journal *Le Correspondant* entitled “La nueva Grecia” [The new Greece], that reports the process of forced Hellenization of Salonika:

El carácter cosmopolita de Salónica complica la situación. Antes de la guerra, esta población tenía 175.000 habitantes, de los cuales 85.000 eran judíos, 20.000

14 *El Liberal* (October 7th, 1915), p. 1f.

griegos, 30.000 musulmanes, 80.000 búlgaros y 300 serbios. Después de la ocupación griega, estas cifras se han modificado. Búlgaros, musulmanes y judíos han emigrado en gran parte. En cambio, han llegado 25.000 griegos, y cada día siguen viniendo á centenares. Estos recién venidos sumergen con su número á los griegos macedonios, y de allí el descontento que reina.

[The cosmopolitan personality of Salonika complicates the situation. Before the war, the population was 175,000, of whom 85,000 were Jews, 20,000 Greeks, 30,000 Muslims, 80,000 Bulgarians, and 300 Serbs. After the Greek occupation, the picture has changed. Bulgarians, Muslims and Jews have largely emigrated. On the other hand, 25,000 Greeks have arrived, and continue arriving every day by the hundreds. These newcomers numerically drown the Macedonian Greeks, and hence the discontent that prevails].¹⁵

War news about events affecting the Jewish population in cities with a strong Sephardic component are also given. For example, both *El Globo* and *La Correspondencia de España* published the same agency news item (received via Geneva) on the taking of Belgrade by German troops in October 1915, which resulted in the destruction of the synagogue and the death of the Jews who had taken refuge there:

Así el aniquilamiento de Belgrado es casi total. Algunas calles quedaron profundamente removidas. Solamente el centro era algo respetado, sin duda por el deseo de los alemanes de conservar para su uso algunos edificios. La lucha en las calles, antes de darse la orden de evacuación, fue violentísima. Los alemanes no hallaron nada utilizable en Belgrado. Los Bancos habían trasladado sus cajas y las pocas casas que escaparon al incendio y al bombardeo, estaban vacías, pues los propietarios habían partido con lo mejor que tenían hacia el interior. Solamente los judíos permanecían en la ciudad. Después de haber ocultado los objetos de algún valor, se refugiaron en la Sinagoga. Pero una batería enfiló el templo y éste aplastó entre sus ruinas á los refugiados. El hospital de la Cruz Roja tuvo la misma suerte, pereciendo los heridos entre escombros y entre llamas. Sólo aparece alguna casa erguida entre las ruinas humeantes. La ciudadela está destruida, el parque arrasado y los barrios industriales totalmente desaparecidos. El Palacio Real es un amasijo de piedras derrumbadas.

15 *Nuestro Tiempo*, no. 191 (November 1914), pp. 257-259. Note that the data offered sum a total population of 215,300 people before the war, not 175,000 people as the newspaper assumes.

[The annihilation of Belgrade is almost complete. Some streets were profoundly shaken. Only the center was respected in part, certainly because the Germans desired to preserve some buildings for their use. The fight in the streets, before giving the evacuation order, was extremely violent. The Germans found nothing usable in Belgrade. Banks had moved their cash boxes and the few houses that escaped the fire and bombardment were empty because the owners had departed to inland with their best properties. Only the Jews remained in the city. After having hidden their most valuable goods, they took refuge in the Synagogue. But a battery aimed at the temple and had buried all the refugees under its ruins. The hospital of the Red Cross had the same fate, and the wounded died in the rubble and flames. There are only a few houses standing among the smoking ruins. The citadel was destroyed, the park disappeared, and the industrial neighborhoods are completely destroyed. The Royal Palace is a jumble of collapsed stones].¹⁶

Also *La Correspondencia de España* offers information on the attack and destruction of an arms factory in Constantinople, where employed were “unos doscientos obreros turcos, judíos la mayor parte, con griegos, armenios y algunos alemanes” [Some two hundred Turkish workers, Jews mostly, with Greeks, Armenians and some Germans].¹⁷

Another consequence of the war was expulsions and forced migration. We have seen how *Nuestro Tiempo* provided information on the emigration of Sephardic Jews of Salonika and the immigration of Greeks.

In 1916, *La Correspondencia de España* published an article entitled “La próxima campaña de Egipto—Preparativos en Palestina” [The next campaign of Egypt—Preparations in Palestine] that reported that:

Los judíos italianos de Jerusalén han sido puestos en la alternativa de abandonar su nacionalidad o de ser expatriados. Algunos se han hecho turcos; otros serán llevados a Italia.¹⁸

In the same newspaper, on May 11th, 1917, a long article “of our editor in Paris”, on the occasion of the struggle between Anglo-Egyptian and German-Turkish armies in

16 *El Globo* (October 23th, 1915), p. 1d; *La Correspondencia de España* (October 19th, 1915), p. 1e.

17 *La Correspondencia de España*, (January 31th, 1916), p. 1c.

18 *La Correspondencia de España* (January 4th, 1916), p. 1c: “The Italian Jews of Jerusalem have had to face the alternative of losing their nationality or being expatriated. Some of them have become Turks, others will be brought to Italy”.

Palestine, talks about the Holy Places and “the wandering Jew” with observations on national attitudes of the Jews.

Reports on abuse and persecution against Sephardim were also published by several newspapers. Thus, in January 25th, 1916, *El Liberal*'s correspondent in Paris, L. Gomez Carrillo, wrote a long article (p. 1c-d) about the Jews of Salonika and their fear of Bulgarian troops.

In June 1917, *La Correspondencia de España* included in its section “Noticias de todas las procedencias” [News from all sources] a piece of news under the title “Los turcos persiguen a los judíos” [The Turkish persecute the Jews], in which we can read:

Dice *The Daily Chronicle* que el rabino de Bagdad, Jiroham el Yachar, ha dirigido al Sultán de Turquía, por mediación de Suiza, una protesta contra las crueldades cometidas con los judíos en el imperio otomano, pues no sólo se ha saqueado a las poblaciones israelitas, sino que los funcionarios turcos han asesinado a jóvenes de ambos sexos, arrojando sus cadáveres al Tigris. En Palestina se han cometido análogas atrocidades.

[The Daily Chronicle says that Rabbi of Baghdad, Jiroham El Yachar, addressed the Sultan of Turkey, through mediation of Switzerland, a protest against the cruelties committed in the Ottoman empire against the Jews; not only have the Jewish populations been pillaged, but Turkish officials have murdered young men and women, throwing their bodies into the Tigris. In Palestine they have committed similar atrocities].¹⁹

Interestingly, the repercussions of the fire of Salonika (August 1917) seem to have had little echo in the Spanish press at the time. As soon as the event occurred, *El País* published a piece of news that arrived by telegraph from Rome:

Media ciudad destruida

ROMA 20 Dicen de Salónica que ayer un horroroso incendio ha destruido la mitad de la ciudad, comprendiendo el barrio del Comercio. Quedan más de setenta mil personas, en su mayoría judíos y musulmanes, sin abrigo. Hoy, el siniestro ha disminuido de intensidad. El número de víctimas es poco elevado.

[Half of the city is destroyed. / ROME 20. Reports from Salonika. Yesterday a

19 *La Correspondencia de España* (June 13th, 1917), p. 2b. The *Daily Chronicle* was a British journal published between 1872 and 1930; in 1930 it joined the *Daily News* and adopted the new title of *News Chronicle*. In 1960 it was annexed to the *Daily Mail*.

horrific fire destroyed half of the city, comprising the district of commerce. / Over seventy thousand people, mostly Jews and Muslims, remain without shelter. Today, the disaster has decreased in intensity. The number of victims is not very high].²⁰

However, ten days later, the same newspaper published a long article, apparently taken from another Spanish newspaper called *El Diluvio* [The flood],²¹ urging Spain to help the Salonikan Sephardim:

Salónica y los judíos españoles: Escribe nuestro colega *El Diluvio* este hermoso artículo:

La prensa extranjera hace una descripción que da grima de los horrores que se han acumulado en la ciudad judeo-española, a la que la guerra europea ha dado una gran celebridad. Como si la fatalidad se cebara en la famosa ciudad cosmopolita, el incendio reciente ha venido a centuplicar los desastres de la guerra. En España debiera haber producido una gran impresión, porque Salónica está poblada en su mayor parte de judíos de origen español. España no puede olvidar que hace algunos siglos expulsó a los hebreos y que, por lo tanto, les debe una reparación. Tal vez esta sería la ocasión de probar que la España actual no es la misma que hizo aquella expulsión. Si los sentimientos cristianos prevalecieran en la sociedad Española, ahora deberían ponerse en movimiento y darles aplicación. En primer lugar, las clases directoras y poseedoras están en la obligación de hacer sentir los beneficios de su situación a aquellas poblaciones que después de haber sentido de cerca los horrores de la guerra, han sido víctimas de una catástrofe de las mayores que registra la historia de nuestra época. No solamente debería arbitrarse recursos para ser enviados a los damnificados por el desastre, como lo han hecho con España diversos países con motivo de siniestros menos importantes, sino que habría lugar a facilitar el 'repatriamiento' a todos aquellos habitantes de Salónica que hablando castellano desearan incorporarse a la nación española. [...] Muchos creen que sería mejor facilitarles la emigración a los Estados Unidos de América, por ofrecerles mejor campo para la lucha; pero no es nada imposible que una parte de los sefarditas prefieran venir a España. Ahora que está ventilándose la cuestión de la reconstitución económica de España, una nueva inmigración judía sería un acicate para las luchas que se avecinan en nuestro suelo.

Pero, ante todo, España les debe una reparación, y ya que el antisemitismo, en la

20 *El País* (August 21st, 1917), p. 3d.

21 *El Diluvio* was a republican federalist and anti-clerical journal published in Barcelona, from 1879 to 1939.

forma en que existe en otros países europeos, es cosa desconocida entre nosotros, y que todo sefardita repatriado no haría más que reintegrarse en su país de origen, los Gobiernos y las clases poderosas han de hacer acto de caridad cristiana mandando dinero a los damnificados [por el incendio] de Salónica y realizar una justicia civil para con todos los sefarditas esparcidos por el mundo abriéndoles las puertas de España y reconociéndoles todos los derechos civiles y políticos -que son poquísimos- de que gozan (¿?) los demás ciudadanos (sic) españoles.

[Salonika and Spanish Jews: Our colleague El Diluvio published this beautiful article: 'The foreign press gives an impressive description of the horrors that happened in the Judeo-Spanish city, which the European war has made well known. As if fate wanted to vent its anger on the famous cosmopolitan city, the recent fire has increased a hundredfold the disasters of war. This should make a great impression in Spain, because Salonika is populated mostly by Jews of Spanish origin. Spain cannot forget that it expelled the Jews a few centuries ago, and therefore it is bound to give them a reparation. Perhaps this would be the chance to prove that Spain today is not the same country as at the time of expulsion. If Christian sentiments prevail in Spanish society, we should now get moving to compensate them. First, the ruling class and wealthy people are obliged to make the benefits of their situation felt by those populations that personally experienced the consequences of war, being victims of one of the largest catastrophes in the recorded history of our time. Not only should resources be sent to the victims of the disaster, as several countries have done with Spain because of less severe incidents, but we must facilitate "repatriation" to all those Spanish-speaking people of Salonika who wish to join the Spanish nation.... Many people believe it would be better to provide them facilities for emigration to the United States of America, where they will have more opportunities to get ahead; but it's not impossible that some of the Sephardim would prefer to come to Spain. Now, when the question of the economic situation of Spain is being discussed, a new Jewish immigration would be an incentive for facing the struggles expected on our soil. But above all, Spain owes reparation, and as anti-Semitism (in the way it exists in other European countries) is unknown among us, and since all Sephardic repatriation would only be reintegration in their country of origin, the governments and powerful classes have to perform an act of Christian charity by sending money to those affected [by fire] in Salonika and provide civil justice for all Sephardim scattered around the world by opening the doors of Spain and by

granting all (even small) civil and politics rights which are enjoyed (?) by other Spanish citizens (sic)].²²

5. Sephardim in Spain during WWI

Newspapers also report some information about the presence of Sephardim in Spain, due to events of the war. Several newspapers report on the problem of Turkish Sephardim expelled from France, who were living in Barcelona as refugees.

On June 7th, 1916 (p. 2c-d), *El Liberal* published an article entitled “Un rasgo de Francia” [A nice attitude of France] which states that, when by reason of war France expelled foreign nationals, the Sephardim who lived in France would have been forced into exile, as Turkish nationals; but France allowed them to stay in their territory, considering them as Spaniards.

Only a few months later, however, both *El Imparcial* and *La Correspondencia de España* report that in Barcelona lived a considerable number of Jews from Salonika who had been expelled from France for being of Turkish nationality or who had fled from Italy.²³ They were under the protection of the consulate of Germany, which offered a daily aid of two pesetas per family. On December 11th, 1916 (p. 3a-b), *El Imparcial*, in a column entitled “Cartas catalanas: Ahasuerus [sic] turco” [Catalan Letters. Turkish [sic] Ahasuerus], explains how, when the budget was exhausted and the economic benefit suspended, a revolt took place that was violently suppressed by the Spanish police, and several people were injured.

Apparently, this was not the first problem to arise with refugee Sephardim. Previously, *La Correspondencia de España* had published in its section “Noticias de todas las procedencias”, the following information, taking a completely different point of view:

Los turcos de Barcelona BARCELONA. (Jueves, tarde.) Ha vuelto a renovarse el conflicto de los súbditos turcos que aquí se encuentran sin medios de vida. El Gobierno turco ordenó al cónsul de Turquía que socorriera a estos súbditos con cuarenta céntimos diarios, en vez de dos pesetas que les abonaba antes el Consulado de Alemania. Así se lo ha comunicado el cónsul de Turquía al gobernador civil. Los interesados protestaron, a pesar de que algunos tienen una posición desahogada.

²² *El País* (August 31st, 1917), p. 1a-b.

²³ On the presence of Turkish Sephardic refugees in Spain and its repercussion in the press, see Paloma Díaz-Mas, “Refugiados Sefardíes en España durante la I Guerra Mundial”, Efrem Yildiz and Ricardo Muñoz Solla (eds.), *Homenaje a Carlos Carrete Parrondo*, in preparation.

Entre ellos hay armenios y judíos. El gobernador ha prometido auxiliar a los verdaderamente necesitados. Dícese que mientras el Consulado de Alemania les estuvo socorriendo, consumió en este objeto cerca de un millón.

[The Turks in Barcelona. Barcelona. (Thursday afternoon.) The conflict of the Turkish individuals settled here without livelihoods has been renewed. The Turkish Consul informed the governor that the Turkish government ordered to help these subjects with forty cents a day, instead of the aid of two pesetas that they had previously received from the Consulate of Germany. Affected people protested, although some have a good economic position. Among them there are some Armenians and Jews. The governor has promised to assist the truly needy. It is said that while the Consulate of Germany was aiding them, nearly one million was spent on this aid].²⁴

However, the event regarding the presence of Sephardim in Spain that attracted more media attention was the visit of Isaac Alcheh y Saporta, director of the Institute of Commerce, an elitist private school in Salonika.

On December 2nd, 1916, Alcheh gave a lecture at the Ateneo de Madrid (then an important center of cultural and political activity) significantly entitled “Salonika Spaniards without homeland”, that takes its title from one of the books by Ángel Pulido.

In his lecture, Alcheh began talking about Pulido’s campaign, then provided information about the Sephardim of Salonika, their history; language; social; cultural life; customs and their relations with Spain and finally, he reproached Spain’s inactivity with regard to the protection of the Sephardim. The real objective of Alcheh's visit was to ask for Spanish nationality for a group of Salonikan Sephardim that had begun to be victimized in the context of the war.

Alcheh’s lecture was reported in several Spanish journals; in addition, the cultural magazine *La Lectura* published the text of his lecture in three installments from January to May 1917, and in the same year the text was reedited in a pamphlet by the Typography of Archives, Library and Museums.²⁵

24 *La Correspondencia de España* (November 17th, 1916), p. 1d.

25 About Alcheh's lecture and its reception Spanish press, see Paloma Díaz-Mas “La visita a España de Isaac Alcheh y Saporta y su repercusión en la prensa española”, David M. Bunis, Ivana Vucina Simovic and Corinna Deppner (eds.), *Jubilee Volume in Honor of Michael Studemund-Halévy*, Barcelona, Tirocinio, in press.

In conclusion

During WWI, Spain did not have much influence in Turkey and the Balkans. It seems that the Spanish newspapers did not send correspondents to Turkey and the Balkans with the express mission of obtaining information; also, there were few Spanish residents in those countries who were able to send first-hand information. Most news items were provided by agencies, taken from foreign newspapers, or sent by correspondents ensconced in Paris, Rome, or Switzerland.

That is why the first-hand materials on the subject published by the Spanish newspapers are of two types: opinion articles on the news received; or reports on events that occurred in Spain, involving Eastern Mediterranean Sephardim (such as the riots of refugees in Barcelona or Alcheh's visit).

In any case, the selection of news and the accompanying comments are very significant and show what kind of information could attract the interest of Spanish readers during World War I in relation to Sephardic Jews.

BIBLIOTECA DIGITAL DEL CIDUSEP